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Chairperson: Mrs. Juul ..... (Norway)

The meeting was called to order at 10.05 a.m.

Agenda items 82 to 97 (*continued*)

General debate on all disarmament and international security agenda items

Ms. Ziv (Israel): Madam Ambassador and friend, allow me to begin by saying how pleased I am to see you chairing the First Committee. Let me assure you of my delegation's full support and cooperation.

In its efforts to promote peace and security through multilateralism, the international community has taken two major approaches. The first is of a more ideological character and has the long-term objective of creating a safer world. The second approach is of a more defensive and realistic character. It is aimed at discerning the most urgent and imminent threats to international security and stability, and finding the most appropriate and effective remedy for them.

For example, the issues of nuclear disarmament and of identifying the root causes of terrorism fall under the first track, whereas strict and responsible export control over sensitive technologies and a ban on the transfer of weapons to terrorists fall under the second.

Israel believes that setting long-term goals would contribute to international and regional stability and security. At the same time, it is clear that striving to achieve long-term goals without first identifying the real and present threats facing us would not be effective. Only when those threats are properly addressed will we be able seriously to engage in the process of dealing with the long-term goals of creating a safer world for all.

The threats we face in our regional environment are, unfortunately, often of an existential character and therefore require a realistic, step-by-step approach. Once threats are identified, modest and gradual measures should be proposed and applied in order to create a new reality based on dialogue and good neighbourliness. Such a reality is vital. Without it, effective regional disarmament and arms control discussions cannot take place.

Artificial attempts to ignore our regional realities cannot contribute to the achievement of long-term goals and could be counterproductive. We believe that two main issues must be accorded the highest priority in the area of international peace and stability: terrorism in all its dimensions, and the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery.

This year, the risks to regional and global stability resulting from these two evils have reached unprecedented levels. Failure to find a suitable answer to these threats could, and probably will, result in a substantial deterioration of personal, regional and global security.

Hizbollah is a terrorist organization armed with advanced and sophisticated weaponry, targeting towns and villages in a neighbouring State with the deliberate

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goal of killing as many civilians as possible. It uses local villages as bases of operation and inhabited houses as launching sites, callously exploiting Lebanese civilians by using them as human shields. Hizbollah has proved to be an immediate strategic threat not only to my country but to others as well. The intention of that terrorist organization and of the countries supporting it has been to destabilize the region. Through their actions, they have been responsible for thousands of casualties among innocent people and have brought the region to the brink of full-scale war.

Other terrorist organizations will almost certainly follow suit. They will acquire MANPADS, rockets and sophisticated missiles from States supporting terrorism. They will create new bases inside inhabited areas and will hide weapons in houses and among civilian populations. They, too, will use populations as human shields.

The international community, including civil society, needs to find answers to these threats, rather than merely limiting the right of victims to defend themselves. A special effort should be invested in preventing and banning the transfer of any type of weapons or military equipment to terrorist groups.

A cautious approach should be taken towards arms transactions with States supporting terrorism. Those States should be held accountable for the assistance they have given to the Hizbollah. The full implementation of the relevant Security Council resolutions, including resolution 1701 (2006), should be a prerequisite for future arms sales to those countries. Failing to properly address the issue of support to terrorism could create a dangerous precedent.

Terrorism puts the stability of the region at risk. Neither confidence-building measures nor new regional security initiatives will be effective without a significant reduction of the level of that threat.

As I mentioned earlier, the second issue which needs strong and decisive action by the international community is the conduct of States developing weapons of mass destruction, in complete disregard for their international obligations. That has been coupled with an aggressive effort to concurrently develop means of delivery. Since the entry into force of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, four significant cases of non-compliance have been formally acknowledged by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). Three took place in our region, in States that do not recognize Israel, one of which still calls openly for our elimination. As is clearly documented in the IAEA reports, that same country, Iran, continues, in defiance of the Security Council's resolutions, to develop its nuclear programme and, at the same time, to develop means of medium- and long-range delivery.

For almost four years now, the international community has striven, first, to reveal Iran's true nuclear activities, and later to receive explanations to the findings; when such explanations were not forthcoming, it has sought to bring Iran's clandestine programme to an end. Unfortunately, until now, those efforts have not borne fruit. Moreover, Iran is a source of proliferation for sensitive components of conventional weapons and weapons of mass destruction programmes. It also openly arms and supports terrorist organizations, first and foremost Hizbollah. Noteworthy is the fact that Iran is assisted in this sponsorship by Syria. Iran's policy dangerously combines a spectrum of threats against which a sober and clearheaded approach must be implemented. Attempts to disregard reality and to delay the implementation of the necessary measures have proven to be the wrong approach.

I have elaborated on the main threats, and it is now my intention to say a few words about what can be done about them. Since those threats are, unfortunately, not new to the international community, many attempts have been made to deal with them. Some measures have been developed by the Security Council, and others appear in different General Assembly programmes and relevant regimes, including the following.

The United Nations Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects has set as one of its main objectives the prevention of arms transfers to terrorists. It has put in place specific recommendations on how to achieve that goal on the national, regional and global levels.

The First Committee of the General Assembly, this very body, has for the past two years adopted by consensus a resolution calling for the prevention of transfers of man-portable air defence systems to non-State actors.

Security Council resolution 1540 (2004) requires Member States to put robust export controls in place in

order to prevent the transfer of sensitive weapons technologies to non-State actors. Security Council resolution 1373 (2001) establishes recommendations for bilateral, regional and multilateral cooperation with a view to fighting international terrorism. Resolution 1695 (2006) on the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and resolution 1696 (2006) on Iran establish clear requirements from those two countries in the nuclear realm. Resolution 1559 (2004) calls for the disarmament of all armed militias in South Lebanon. And recently, following the latest conflict, resolution 1701 (2006) prohibits the transfer of any type of weapon to actors other than the lawful Government of Lebanon.

Those are only a few examples of the various resolutions and tools that are the fruit of lengthy negotiations and delicate compromises. Had they been fully implemented, they could have prevented the latest conflict in our region, and they have the potential to prevent future ones as well.

We have the tools. It is our decision, as members of the international community, to see to their implementation. Developing tools and drafting resolutions cannot be a goal in themselves. We all want to see stability in our troubled region. Likewise, we want to guarantee continued global safety and stability. To advance those goals, we need not only to draft resolutions, but, as difficult as it may be, we also need to guarantee implementation of what has been agreed upon.

Mr. Bouchaara (Morocco) (*spoke in French*): At the outset, Madam, may I offer you the congratulations of the Moroccan delegation on your assumption of the chairmanship of the First Committee. The Kingdom of Morocco is pleased to see Norway, which has always been devoted to the cause of disarmament, assume chairmanship of the Committee. I assure you of the full support of the Moroccan delegation in your work. My congratulations also go to the other members of the Bureau.

I should also like to welcome Ambassador Sareva, currently heading the secretariat of the First Committee, and to thank Ambassador Tanaka, Under-Secretary-General for Disarmament Affairs, for the excellent work done by his Department.

The Moroccan delegation aligns itself with the statements made by the representative of Indonesia on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement and by the representative of Nigeria on behalf of the African Group.

This year will not see an end to the inevitable failures in the United Nations bodies responsible for disarmament. There is no point in drawing up an exhaustive list of the failures of the past months. They are many and known to all. Even more disturbing is the growing scepticism we sense in civil society with regard to the genuine political will of the States Members of the United Nations to meet the great challenges of disarmament and non-proliferation in the twenty-first century.

It has become customary, in seeking a convincing explanation for the inevitability of failure, to justify it by referring to the obsolete nature of our working methods. It is true that it is sometimes difficult to explain to an outside observer how bodies responsible for matters of such importance to international security can discuss issues of procedure for hours on end — as has occurred in the past — negotiating sometimes secondary matters word by word, losing sight of the essence of their work, and thus eroding the confidence and hope placed in us by civil society. The requirement of obtaining results, although indispensable to any action, does not seem to be an element of our immediate objectives.

That is why it would seem essential, if we are to streamline our working methods and update our negotiating techniques, to raise certain fundamental questions.

What do we want to achieve? What collective goals do we and can we achieve? What is the meaning of collective action? Those and nothing else are the criteria that should determine our working methods. Do we have a common vision and perspective of the world in which we wish to live? If we answer that question in the affirmative, we will see immense potential opening up in terms of modernizing the work of the First Committee. If, however, it should prove impossible to identify common priorities, we will be condemned to perpetuating indefinitely the endless differences of opinion that seem to have characterized our work for so long now.

What, ultimately, are the priorities of a deliberative body of this kind, which is responsible for determining the general approach to be taken by the international community in the coming year in the area of disarmament?

Let us recall a number of obvious truths. First, disarmament and non-proliferation cannot be separated. We cannot make progress in one area while overlooking the other. The second obvious truth is that we should recall the need to rehabilitate the main international disarmament and non-proliferation instruments. Let us consider the most significant example in this regard — the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). It has become customary to disparage the NPT by highlighting its inadequacies. However, the NPT has made it possible to curb the proliferation of nuclear weapons and has set basic parameters for the use of nuclear energy for civilian purposes. It has also established essential legal obligations for the nuclear Powers.

If we are to make progress in disarmament, we should not ignore the past but, rather, consolidate our achievements, as reflected in the provisions of the NPT and in the final documents of the Review Conferences of 1995 and 2000. The major international treaties should not be disparaged; they should be strengthened. In this regard, multilateralism is the right approach, because it is by definition inclusive, making possible concrete, tangible action for achieving general and complete disarmament. That is the spirit that animates the claims of the Non-Aligned Movement — of which Morocco is a member — as reflected in the Final Document adopted in Havana on 16 September.

The regional dimension of general and complete disarmament is also fundamental for international security. Of course the right of every State to defend itself and to provide for its own security is recognized by the Charter. But how can we not be alarmed by the fact that — as the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute has just revealed — military expenditure worldwide in 2006 alone has exceeded $1,060 billion? For the Kingdom of Morocco, the most important issue for the twenty-first century is human development, the dissemination of learning and knowledge and the consolidation of the benefits of democracy. It is therefore shocking to think that in regions that still suffer cruelly from a lack of development projects that would allow for greater regional integration, millions of dollars are being spent on the purchase of military equipment.

The Kingdom of Morocco is deeply committed to the virtues of dialogue, negotiation and the peaceful settlement of disputes. My country is following with interest all initiatives in its immediate neighbourhood that could ensure security in the Mediterranean. These include, on our southern flank, building a united and prosperous Maghreb, in which the sovereignty and territorial integrity of States are respected. In the Middle East, the Palestinian question must be resolved and a Palestinian State, with Al-Quds Al-Sharif as its capital, must be established. To guarantee lasting peace in the region, it is essential that Israel adhere to the NPT and place its nuclear installations under the safeguards regime of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA).

As State party to the NPT, the Kingdom of Morocco has always striven to scrupulously fulfil its obligations. My country has just been elected to the Board of Governors of the IAEA and will pursue its efforts to facilitate agreement on the major questions relating to combating the proliferation of nuclear weapons.

With regard to delivery systems, Morocco has the privilege of chairing the group of States subscribing to The Hague Code of Conduct Against Ballistic Missile Proliferation. In this context, Morocco will spare no effort to explain and promote the objectives of The Hague Code through dialogue — which we hope will be constructive — with the countries that have not yet subscribed to that important international instrument, with a view to achieving its universality.

In addition, and guided by the same concern to reinvigorate all of the bodies responsible for disarmament in the United Nations, my country, which chairs the group of 21 non-aligned and neutral States within the Conference on Disarmament, will work hard to promote dialogue aimed at achieving balanced solutions that will make it possible to break the current deadlock in the work of that body.

The work and the success of this session of the First Committee will be judged in terms of our capacity to meet the expectations of peoples and of civil society with regard to the crucial issue of combating the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons. This problem was discussed by the Review Conference in July; it must be addressed urgently and with courage. The traffic in arms, which fuels conflict — particularly on the African continent — is having a catastrophic effect in terms of loss of life. It also has an effect on economic development in the countries concerned and weakens State institutions. The traffic in arms is preventing peoples from enjoying their most fundamental

rights — the right to life and to development. We hope that on such an important issue the First Committee will find answers that respond to the legitimate expectations of the affected people and of civil society as a whole.

Ms. Terrazas Ontiveros (Bolivia) (*spoke in Spanish*): I should like first of all to congratulate you, Madam, on your election to the chairmanship of the Disarmament and International Security Committee. I should also like congratulate all the members of the Bureau, who are helping you to carry out the important task of guiding our work.

Bolivia associates itself with the statement made by the representative of the Republic of Indonesia on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement.

On 14 December, the calendar will remind us that 60 years have passed since the General Assembly adopted, at its first session in 1946, resolution 41 (I) on the principles governing the general regulation and reduction of armaments, pursuant to Article 11 of the Charter and with a view to strengthening international peace and security in conformity with the purposes and principles of the United Nations.

However, nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction continue to be a cause of profound concern for the international community, not only because of the increase in the number of States that possess such weapons, but also because their complex expansion is becoming increasingly hard to prevent. The existence of thousands of nuclear weapons in a state of high alert, their proliferation to unstable regions and the possibility that non-State actors such as terrorist groups seek to acquire nuclear weapons or related materials represent a real threat to all States on every continent and in every region of the world.

We should also recall that in resolution 41 (I) the General Assembly urged all Members of the United Nations to render every possible assistance to the Security Council and to the Atomic Energy Commission in order to promote the establishment and maintenance of international peace and collective security with the least diversion for armaments of the world's human and economic resources.

What is certain is that over the past six decades the economic gap between rich and poor countries has grown wider and that the increasing threat of weapons of mass destruction, as well as the problem of extreme poverty, remain unresolved.

We wonder why the magnitude of these threats, whose devastating effects are clearly understood by the international community, has not succeeded in convincing everyone of the urgent need to move forward decisively and steadfastly in the area of disarmament and non-proliferation. Why, despite the risks involved in possessing such weapons, do some seem irresistibly attracted to them?

Bolivia believes that the first step towards complete and general disarmament, which would make it possible to ensure that nuclear energy is used for peaceful purposes only, is universal participation in the disarmament and non-proliferation treaties, under an international control and monitoring system and commitments by each State to strictly comply with them.

It is true that global action is not the only way to tackle the threat. Nevertheless, inclusion and participation are crucial if all States are to develop a sense of shared responsibility so as to address the most pressing global problems.

In that respect, the United Nations and the multilateral process, despite the missed opportunities, must continue to play an active and resolute role in preventing the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and once again accord the issue of disarmament, along with that of development, priority importance on its agenda.

But there are a few hopeful signs. In its annual report for 2006, the Provisional Technical Secretariat of the Preparatory Commission for the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty states that since August 2005, considerable progress has been made with respect to the establishment of the verification regime of the Treaty and concerning preparations for its entry into force. It also reaffirmed the strong political support that exists for this instrument and gives a very positive assessment of the multilateral efforts made by the international community to achieve its entry into force.

Bolivia joined the CTBT on 24 September 1996 and ratified it in 1999. Currently it is taking part in the International Monitoring System, with two seismological and one infrasound station. It has established a national authority and has created a technical body to serve as coordinator for the National Data Centre.

The establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones, zones of peace and denuclearized zones are a way of

achieving nuclear disarmament and is also a reflection of the inherent desire of every human being to enjoy genuine peace and security, to eliminate the scourge of war, and to free up economic, intellectual and other resources so as to devote them primarily to development requirements.

Since 1967, the message of Latin America and the Caribbean that the goal of a world free of nuclear weapons must be achieved has crossed oceans and seas and is increasingly being heard in other continents, regions and subregions. We are pleased to see, along with the treaties of Tlatelolco, Rarotonga, Bangkok and Pelindaba, which established nuclear-weapon-free zones, and Mongolia's nuclear-weapon-free status as a State, the signing last September of the Semipalatinsk Treaty on the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in Central Asia.

Bolivia will continue to encourage and support the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones on the basis of its own experience as a State party to the Treaty of Tlatelolco, and, in line with its pacifist tradition, it will continue to take part in all multilateral initiatives that contribute to the maintenance of international peace and security.

The multifaceted problem of the illicit trade in and the uncontrolled circulation of small arms and light weapons, as well as their humanitarian and socio-economic consequences, led my Government to step up its efforts to enact a law regulating the acquisition, registry, possession and carrying of such weapons for civilian and military purposes. We have therefore requested the technical assistance of the Regional Disarmament Centre based in Lima, Peru, on a draft bill on dual-use arms, ammunitions, explosives and chemical agents.

We are continuing to exchange experiences and to address the issue of the question of the illicit trade in small arms in the subregional framework of Mercosur and the Andean community.

Bolivia has also initiated the ratification process of the Protocol against the Illicit Manufacturing and Trafficking in Firearms, Their Parts and Components and Ammunition, which supplements the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime.

Bearing in mind the fact that an effective way of revitalizing the General Assembly is to comply with its resolutions and decisions, Bolivia has endeavoured to fulfil the requirements of the resolutions adopted on the recommendation of the Committee within the timelines set.

Lastly, Bolivia deems it a priority to move forward in education on disarmament and on the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons, as well as on the promotion of a culture of peace, in cooperation with regional and international bodies and civil society groups.

Mrs. Rocca (United States of America): Madam Chairperson, our delegation is very pleased to see the representative of a close friend and ally in the chair. All Member States recognize the leading role that Norway has played in promoting efforts to modernize the United Nations and make it a more effective Organization. We are confident that the Committee will prosper under your direction, and we pledge our support for your endeavours.

Our delegation hopes that the Chairperson and other members of the Bureau, to whom we extend our congratulations, will lead the Member States in securing the endorsement by the General Assembly this year of the agenda clusters that the Committee adopted by consensus in 2004. We believe that their implementation would contribute further to improving the effectiveness of the methods of work of this Committee, as the General Assembly envisioned when it adopted resolutions 58/41 and 59/95 by consensus, which the United States had the honour to sponsor.

In that regard, we take this opportunity to recall for delegations the difficulties that the recent Secretariat practice of presenting programme budget implication statements orally, rather than in written form, has posed for the Member States. All delegations benefit from the ability to make informed and considered decisions on all budgetary matters. Accordingly, our delegation respectfully calls on our colleagues in the Secretariat to ensure that such statements, even when they report no additional spending, are circulated sufficiently in advance to permit delegations to assess them properly. Perhaps the Chairperson and the Bureau could use their good offices to that end.

Governments in future may well view 2006 as a watershed year. After too many years of inaction, the Security Council finally began to address the threats that the nuclear-weapon programmes of Iran and North

Korea pose to the maintenance of international peace and security. Also, the Conference on Disarmament, which has spent most of the past decade on fruitless procedural wrangling, has devoted itself this year to serious substantive discussions — not yet negotiations, but substantive nonetheless — as it seeks to break free of the political linkages that for nearly 10 years have prevented the Conference from carrying out its responsibilities as the principal multilateral negotiating forum for arms control, non-proliferation, and disarmament agreements.

What conclusions can we draw from developments in Geneva this year? First, that the Conference on Disarmament does not need to establish subsidiary bodies in order to examine in depth all issues of interest to its Member States, and, secondly, that only one item before the Conference currently is ripe for negotiation, namely, on a fissile material cut-off treaty. Our delegation recalls the words of the Secretary-General when he addressed the Conference on 21 June:

> "It is long overdue for this negotiating body to abandon the all-consuming linkages that have dominated your approach in recent years, and get down to substantive work. I do not discount the difficulty that you face in settling longstanding differences, especially over nuclear disarmament and negative security assurances. Yet those difficulties pale in significance when measured against the immense challenges that the global community faces in the broader sphere on non-proliferation, disarmament and arms control."

The early negotiation by the Conference on Disarmament of a fissile material cut-off treaty is particularly important because the world community today faces no greater security challenge than the threat posed by the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery. In the hands of rogue States or terrorists, nuclear, biological and chemical weapons could inflict massive harm on innocent civilians and on the entire international community. To that end, the United States has taken the lead in offering a treaty that should lead to negotiations.

The United States in recent years has collaborated with like-minded Governments on a series of innovative approaches to deal with non-proliferation. We have drawn on existing institutions, such as the Security Council and its 1540 Committee activities; existing groups of States, such as the Group of Eight and the Global Partnership; and ad hoc coalitions, such as the Proliferation Security Initiative.

The reduction and prevention of the worldwide proliferation threat remain critically important. The United States is committed to the Cooperative Threat Reduction Programme and similar efforts and devotes significant resources to these programmes, challenging other nations to match our commitment to disarmament and non-proliferation.

The United States has contributed more than $1 billion this year towards threat reduction and non-proliferation programmes. Today, some two dozen donors, including the United States, have pledged more than $17 billion towards the Partnership's $20 billion target. The United States also works closely with Russia to secure vulnerable nuclear materials and eliminate excess weapons-grade materials. At the Bratislava summit in 2005, President Bush and President Putin agreed to accelerate those efforts and complete security upgrades by the end of 2008.

Building on those nuclear security efforts, President Bush and President Putin, on 15 July, launched the Global Initiative to Combat Nuclear Terrorism. Under that Initiative, we seek to build an international coalition of nations committed to cooperate to improve the accounting, control and physical protection of nuclear material and radioactive substances; detect and suppress illicit trafficking; respond to and mitigate the consequences of acts of nuclear terrorism; ensure that States take all possible measures to deny safe haven to terrorists seeking to acquire or use nuclear materials; and strengthen our respective national legal frameworks to ensure the effective prosecution of terrorists and those who facilitate terrorism.

In addition to the nuclear threat, threats from biological and chemical weapons continue to be of concern. The parties to the Biological Weapons Convention (BWC) have undertaken national efforts to establish and enhance implementation measures, including penal legislation, pathogen security and disease surveillance in cases of alleged use or unusual outbreaks. Similarly, lessons learned from technical assistance visits to the capitals of parties to the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC) will be of great value in providing assistance to other Treaty parties.

Such efforts, of course, help the parties to the two Conventions to fulfil their obligations under Security Council resolution 1540 (2004). We look forward to agreement during the upcoming BWC Review Conference and Conference of States Parties to the CWC to continue these real-world efforts to curb these growing threats.

Not all the news is good, however. As delegations are aware, the nuclear non-proliferation regime continues to face significant challenges from North Korea and Iran. In both instances, the United States is pursuing multilateral diplomacy, in concert with friends and allies, to address these challenges. Increasing emphasis by the international community on non-proliferation and compliance in multilateral forums and multinational arrangements will, over time, bring about a much-needed paradigm shift in the global nuclear non-proliferation regime.

The United States is seriously concerned about Tuesday's announcement by the North Korean Government of its intention to undertake a nuclear test. Such an action would be directly contrary to the interests of all of North Korea's neighbours and to peace and security in the Asia-Pacific region. We will work with Japan, South Korea and all our partners to register our opposition to that provocative announcement.

The United States and its partners in the Six-Party Talks seek the denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula through peaceful, diplomatic means. We continue to strive for implementation of the September 2005 Joint Statement, which resulted from the Six-Party Talks and which offers North Korea a clear path towards a positive future and concrete benefits in return for carrying out its commitment to denuclearize. We continue to work with our Six-Party partners to bring the North Koreans back to the Talks, most recently offering a Six-Party ministerial meeting in Malaysia to provide the North Koreans with a high-level venue in which to express their concerns.

We call on all five members of the Six-Party Talks and the Security Council — as stated in Security Council resolution 1695 (2006) — to exert every effort to persuade North Korea that the test of a nuclear weapon would only bring about its further isolation and would not be in the interests of the North Korean people.

To our disappointment, North Korea continues to reject these efforts, refuses to carry out its commitment under the September 2005 Joint Statement to denuclearize and has refused for more than 11 months to return to the Six-Party Talks. A North Korean test of a nuclear weapon would severely undermine our confidence in North Korea's commitment to denuclearization and to the Six-Party Talks, and would pose a threat to peace and security in Asia and the rest of the world. A provocative action of that nature would only further isolate the North Korean regime and deny the people of the North the benefits offered to them in the Six-Party Talks, which they so rightly deserve. The United States will continue to work with its allies and partners to discourage such a reckless action and will respond appropriately. We stand firmly with our allies in the region and reaffirm our commitment to their security.

In the case of Iran, on 31 July, the Security Council adopted resolution 1696 (2006). That resolution demands that Iran suspend all enrichment-related and reprocessing activities and calls upon Iran to take the steps that the Board of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) deemed necessary. The deadline for Iran's compliance was 31 August.

The international community has presented that regime with a choice between two fundamentally different courses. The negative choice is for Tehran to maintain its current course, pursuing nuclear weapons in defiance of its international obligations. If Iran does so, it will face further international isolation and sanctions. Iran's failure to comply with Council resolution 1696 (2006) provides a clear mandate to adopt a Chapter VII sanctions resolution. The Council expressed its intention to pursue measures under Article 41 of the Charter as part of the July resolution. The positive and constructive choice is for the Iranian regime to alter its present course and comply with Council resolution 1696 (2006). That path would yield significant benefits for the Iranian people, including peaceful nuclear energy.

Our delegation takes this opportunity to express the deep disappointment of the United States that the Asian Group, here in New York, designated Iran as a Vice-Chair of the Disarmament Commission last April and that the Middle East and South Asia Group, in Vienna, designated Iran as a Vice-Chair of the General Committee at the IAEA General Conference just last month. Treating Tehran as a member in good standing of the community of nations sends that regime and the international community precisely the wrong message

about Iran's continued disregard for its obligations with regard to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and the IAEA.

This year, the First Committee has the opportunity to use the enhanced mechanisms that delegations put in place in recent years to strengthen the international security dialogue. We all must do our best to set aside our differences and come together to express, as strongly as we can, the determination of the international community to thwart the aims of those who would rend asunder the nuclear non-proliferation regime and thereby undermine our common security. Our delegation looks forward to working with like-minded delegations to achieve that objective.

Mr. Kafando (Burkina Faso) (*spoke in French*): On behalf of the delegation of Burkina Faso, I should like to warmly congratulate you, Madam, on your assumption of the chairmanship of this important Committee. You can be assured of our full availability and cooperation. Our congratulations go also to Ambassador Tanaka, both on his appointment as head of the Department for Disarmament Affairs and on his important statement at the beginning of our work.

My delegation associates itself with the statements made by the representative of Indonesia, on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement, and by the representative of Nigeria, on behalf of the Group of African States.

It is estimated that in 2006, global military spending will total $1.12 trillion. However, as the Secretary-General noted in his most recent report on the work of the Organization (A/61/1), each year, more than 10 million children die before their fifth birthday, mostly from preventable causes, more than 800 million people suffer from chronic undernourishment and more than 25 million people have died from the affects of HIV/AIDS over the past 25 years. Those figures, which are all-time records, should challenge our individual and collective consciences. For Burkina Faso, they are a serious cause for concern.

Nor can we, unfortunately, find any reason for consolation in the recent developments in the areas of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation and international security: the failure of the 2005 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), the silence of the 2005 World Summit Outcome Document (resolution 60/1) regarding the important issue of weapons of mass destruction, the inability to reach a consensus on the outcome document of this year's Small Arms Review Conference, the terrorist threat that continues to hang over our heads like the sword of Damocles, and the rising tensions linked to the nuclear issue in certain regions of the world. To say the least, the world is certainly not at peace with itself, despite the hopes raised by the end of the cold war.

In these times of uncertainty, a healthy jolt is imperative and urgent, and this jolt should be based upon the foundation of strengthened multilateralism, the primacy of law accepted by all and a climate of mutual trust at the bilateral and global levels. That is why we should recognize and reaffirm that the NPT is and must remain at the heart of the international disarmament and non-proliferation regime. That is the reason why the rapid entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) has become a vital necessity. And it is also why the so-called Iranian and Korean peninsula nuclear crises must be resolved through negotiations in a way that respects the rights and interests of the parties and international legality.

While the nuclear threat is in the spotlight today, conventional weapons, in particular small arms and light weapons, are no less important. These weapons are an open wound in many regions of the world. They fuel conflict, organized transnational crime and illicit trafficking of all kinds, while sapping the development efforts of the countries concerned. We need to show commitment and determination to eradicate this scourge. And this is the place to note with satisfaction the transformation into a convention of the moratorium on light weapons of the Economic Community of West African States, which strengthens the legal basis for countries in that subregion. The international community should lend its support to that movement.

As a beneficiary of its services since its creation, Burkina Faso would like to bear witness to the importance of the activities of the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Africa, which is located in Togo. Unfortunately, the Centre is currently going through a period of turbulence because of the inadequate resources made available to it. My country would like to appeal for revitalizing that important instrument for the prevention of conflict and the promotion of peace.

In addition to the many other measures taken in compliance with the relevant conventions to which it is

party, Burkina Faso, in recent years, has strengthened its legal and institutional arsenal in the disarmament sphere. Following the creation of a National Atomic Energy Authority, a High Authority to control the import and use of arms and a National Commission against the proliferation of light weapons, my Government adopted a decree a few months ago that establishes a National Authority for the implementation of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT). Thus, complying with the provisions of the Treaty, of whose beneficial effects Burkina Faso is convinced, my country is making its contribution to efforts to ensure the primacy of international law. We join in the call for a comprehensive convention that would offer guarantees to non-nuclear-weapon States, with a view to laying the foundations for a general climate of confidence.

More than ever, we are at a crossroads. We have in our hands the means of leading humanity into a deadlock or opening the door to a safer world for future generations. Let us make the right choice.

Mr. Martínez Flores (El Salvador) (*spoke in Spanish*): Madam Chairperson, I would like to begin by expressing our satisfaction over your election to guide the Committee's work during this session. Your guidance will give our debate an element of gender mainstreaming from the perspective of the First Committee. Likewise, we would like to take advantage of this opportunity to express our deep gratitude to Ambassador Choi of the Republic of Korea for his excellent leadership during the sixtieth session

My delegation would like to express its concern over the stagnation that we see on a number of disarmament-related themes. We are extremely concerned by the lack of agreement this year, in particular in the Review Conference for the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects. However, we remain confident that, in the short term, the international community will re-focus its efforts to keep these topics alive. We are convinced that multilateralism is, and will continue to be, the way to the maintenance of international peace and security and also to air and find viable solutions to issues of disarmament and non-proliferation in all of their dimensions.

While these themes give rise to concerns at all levels, I would like to draw attention to the concerns of small States that, like mine, tackle these issues only to find that it is enormously complex to find solutions to them.

As a member of the Peacebuilding Commission, we are sure that that new body will provide solid support, inter alia, to disarmament, demobilization and reintegration of ex-combatants during peacekeeping operations. We applaud the European Union vision of including comprehensive measures for disarmament, demobilization and reintegration in the work of the Peacebuilding Commission.

In Central America, the eradication of anti-personnel mines is a task that has not gone away, and to which all affected countries have been committed. But complete eradication requires strengthened comprehensive mine action, which will contribute to the efforts we have already made. It is just as important, or even more important, to devote attention to survivors of anti-personnel landmine accidents.

On issues related to nuclear disarmament, we look forward to the preparatory work for the NPT Review Conference planned for the first half of 2007. We believe that non-proliferation is closely linked to nuclear disarmament, and we hope that as we begin our work we will achieve progress in both areas. In this respect, my delegation would like to express its concern over the announcement made on 3 October by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea that it will carry out nuclear testing.

To conclude, we join the appeal made by other nations and regional groups that to make progress in these endeavours we need a heavy dose of political will. In that respect, Madam Chairperson, you can certainly count on the full cooperation of my delegation.

Mr. M. Khan (Pakistan): I congratulate you, Madam, on your election as Chairperson of the First Committee. We are confident that the Committee will achieve optimal results under your able guidance. You can count on our cooperation.

We also convey our sincere appreciation to Ambassador Choi Young-jin for his leadership of the First Committee last year. We welcome the appointment of Mr. Nobuake Tanaka as Under-Secretary-General for Disarmament Affairs and assure him of our full cooperation in promoting the agreed goals of disarmament.

We associate ourselves with the statement made by the representative of Indonesia on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement.

In my statement, I would like to touch on five themes: global security, regional security, Pakistan's strategic posture, South Asia and institutional challenges.

The Charter recognizes security as the right of every State. The Declaration of the first special session on disarmament (see resolution S-10/2) adopted the principle of equal security for all States. A cooperative approach to collective security and a rule-based international order are the best guarantee for viable security. Norms for security, disarmament and non-proliferation should thus be developed, applied and implemented through multilateral institutions. National means or restrictive groups, however powerful they may be, cannot assure international security.

In order to make such norms relevant, we must address the motives that drive States to acquire armaments forcibly. These motives include disputes and conflicts with powerful States, perceived threats from superior conventional and non-conventional forces and discrimination in the application of international law.

Recent developments have revealed that the old consensus on disarmament and non-proliferation has broken down. Pakistan has proposed convening a special conference to bring about a new consensus which responds to current and emerging realities. Such a conference will help promote universal nuclear disarmament under verified international control. This new consensus should revive the commitment of all States to complete nuclear disarmament, establish non-discriminatory standards for peaceful nuclear cooperation, and normalize the relationship between the Treaty on the Non-proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) regime and the three non-NPT nuclear-weapon States. It would also shape an agreed basis for the promotion of the peaceful uses of nuclear energy under appropriate international safeguards in accordance with the international obligations of States and on a non-discriminatory basis.

An indispensable first step is the commitment by all nuclear-weapon States to achieve nuclear disarmament within a reasonable time frame and to revalidate the bargain on disarmament and non-proliferation and restore a genuine balance between them.

We support negotiations on a fissile material treaty in accordance with the Shannon mandate and the five ambassadors' proposal for a universal, non-discriminatory, multilateral and internationally and effectively verifiable treaty.

Until nuclear disarmament is achieved, non-nuclear-weapon States should have assurances that nuclear weapons will not be used against them. The security assurances offered by nuclear-weapon States should be translated into a universal, unconditional and legally binding treaty.

We share the majority view that existing international legal instruments are inadequate to prevent the weaponization of outer space. We should consolidate and reinforce this regime and enhance its effectiveness.

We look forward to the 2006 Review Conference of the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention as a means to reinforce the Convention and pave the way for cooperation and exchanges in the field of biosciences.

Efforts should be stepped up to defuse regional tensions and resolve conflicts in the Middle East. Pakistan supports the fulfilment of international obligations by all States and the objective of creating a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East.

The confrontation over Iran's nuclear programme threatens further instability in an already inflamed region. We are encouraged by the negotiations between Iran and the five permanent members of the Security Council plus Germany, and believe that this issue can be resolved peacefully in a manner that accommodates the legitimate rights and interests of all parties. Resort to coercion or, worse, the use of force, could lead to grave consequences, regional and global.

The announcement by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea regarding its intention to conduct a nuclear-weapon test is a matter of deep concern. We urge the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to desist from introducing nuclear weapons on the Korean peninsula, which would be highly destabilizing for the region. This announcement adds urgency to the resumption of the Six-Party Talks.

The sole purpose of Pakistan's nuclear capability is to deter external aggression. Our strategic posture reflects restraint and responsibility. We maintain a credible minimum nuclear deterrence capability.

Pakistan will not use, or threaten to use, nuclear weapons against non-nuclear-weapon States. We are against a nuclear or conventional arms race in South Asia. Pakistan has taken a series of measures to ensure responsible stewardship of our nuclear programme. Details are given in my written statement.

A stable security environment is important for peace in our region. Pakistan has proposed a strategic restraint regime in South Asia consisting of three elements: conflict resolution, nuclear and missile restraint, and balance of conventional forces.

Since early 2004, we have pursued a multipronged engagement with India on the basis of confidence-building measures and a composite dialogue. President Pervez Musharraf and Prime Minister Manmohan Singh, in their meeting on the sidelines of the Non-Aligned Movement Summit in Havana on 16 September, agreed that the peace process must be maintained, as its success was important for both countries and for the future of the entire region. The two leaders decided to continue the joint search for mutually acceptable options for a peaceful negotiated settlement of all issues between India and Pakistan, including the issue of Jammu and Kashmir.

Since 2004, we have held four rounds of consultations with India to develop measures for confidence-building, real-time communication, risk reduction and strategic stability. The two sides have already signed an agreement on pre-notification of flight-testing of ballistic missiles.

Pakistan has a legitimate requirement for nuclear power generation to meet the energy needs of our expanding economy. We will continue to develop nuclear technology for power generation under strict International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) safeguards. We will not accept discrimination.

The Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG) is considering new demands for exceptionalism. We trust that the NSG will adopt a non-discriminatory criteria-based approach that will offer equal opportunities for access to civilian nuclear technology.

The preponderant focus on the threat posed by weapons of mass destruction (WMDs) should not divert attention from the need for the regulation and reduction of conventional arms and armed forces. We need to prevent the build-up of conventional weapons and forces, particularly in regions of tension. In South Asia, we need a stable balance of conventional forces to ensure strategic stability between Pakistan and India. There must be restraint both in the demand and in the supply of conventional weapons. Massive introduction of sophisticated weaponry will accentuate conventional asymmetries and compel greater reliance on nuclear and missile deterrence.

This year, the Conference on Disarmament saw heightened activity. The focused and structured debates held by the six Presidents of the Conference resulted in enhanced exchanges of views on the four core issues. We commend the six Presidents for their efforts. The United States of America also submitted draft texts on the mandate of an ad hoc committee and on a fissile material treaty. Despite those developments, the fact is that the Conference has not been able to start negotiations. We must bear in mind that the Conference on Disarmament is a negotiating, not a deliberative, forum.

Pakistan supports the five ambassadors' proposal, as it presents a package solution to address the four core issues in a comprehensive and balanced manner. It is also supported by a majority of delegations. The agenda of the Conference on Disarmament, stemming from the 10 priorities derived from the first special session on disarmament — the so-called decalogue — and including nuclear disarmament, the fissile materials treaty, the prevention of an arms race in outer space and the Nuclear Safety Account, constitutes a delicate equilibrium. Attempts to tinker with this balance have resulted in an impasse.

Two assumptions must be addressed in this context. Those four issues are post-cold-war, twenty-first century, contemporary issues. It is not correct to say that the time is ripe for a fissile material treaty, but not for the other issues. There is sufficient legal, technical and political basis for movement on all four issues. They all qualify on grounds of contemporaneity and ripeness. Of course, when negotiations start, one can imagine a varying degree of progression and a different trajectory for each issue.

Multilateralism is not a simple aggregation of national interests. No such aggregation is possible, given the varied interests of States. Multilateralism is the sum of enlightened self-interests. It entails cooperation and agreement on monitoring, verification and compliance. Let us resolve to pursue genuine multilateralism through this session and beyond.

Mr. Thaung Tun (Myanmar): The delegation of Myanmar congratulates you, Madam, on your election as Chairperson of the First Committee and looks forward to working closely with you to advance the cause of disarmament and arms control. You can rest assured of my delegation's full support and cooperation as you discharge your important task.

My delegation joins others in welcoming the new Under-Secretary-General for Disarmament, Mr. Nobuaki Tanaka, and wishes him every success.

Myanmar associates itself with the statement made at the 2nd meeting, on 2 October, by the representative of Indonesia on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement.

In the past year, the international community has continued to give considerable attention to concerns over weapons of mass destruction, particularly nuclear weapons. Notwithstanding this attention, there is a glaring lack of tangible results. This casts an ominous shadow over our work.

My delegation is deeply concerned about the failure of the 2005 Review Conference of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons to conclude a substantive final document. The Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) has been the cornerstone of the international nuclear non-proliferation regime for the past 35 years, and lack of progress on implementation of its article VI, particularly in the light of the 2000 agreement on the 13 practical steps, is disappointing. The inability of the 2005 World Summit to agree on texts related to nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation is another setback. It is also regrettable that this year the Conference on Disarmament again failed to adopt a programme of work, and that efforts to establish a subsidiary body to deal with nuclear disarmament were not fruitful. The Disarmament Commission, too, was unable to agree on a substantive agenda to address the two preliminary agenda items pertaining to nuclear and conventional weapons.

The continued existence of weapons of mass destruction, particularly nuclear weapons, represents the greatest threat to mankind. In these circumstance, reports that new nuclear weapon systems are being developed and strategic doctrines that lower the threshold for the use of those weapons are being considered are disturbing. Myanmar believes that the total elimination of nuclear weapons is the only absolute guarantee against the threat or use of such weapons. Accordingly, during the past decade, Myanmar has been proposing a comprehensive draft resolution calling upon the nuclear-weapon States to undertake the step-by-step reduction of the nuclear threat with a view to achieving the total elimination of nuclear weapons. The disarmament measures undertaken should essentially be irreversible, verifiable and transparent in order to gain the confidence of the international community.

Myanmar will again table a draft resolution on nuclear disarmament at this session. It is my earnest hope that it will continue to receive the valuable support of Member States, as in previous years.

We consider that, pending the total elimination of nuclear weapons, we should pursue efforts towards the conclusion of a universal, unconditional and legally binding instrument on security assurances to non-nuclear-weapon States. We also believe that nuclear-weapon-free zones established in various regions of the world contribute to strengthening global nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation efforts. Such a zone was established in our region, South-East Asia, in 1995. We welcome the recent signing in Semipalatinsk by five countries of the Central Asian Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone Treaty.

The entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) is vital for nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation. This year marks the tenth anniversary of the Treaty's opening for signature. The Treaty now enjoys near-universal support, as 176 countries have signed it and 135 have ratified it. The Declaration adopted at the 2005 Conference on Facilitating the Entry into Force of the CTBT, held in New York, and the Third Joint Ministerial Statement of support for the CTBT, issued in New York on 20 September 2006, are positive developments.

The prevention of an arms race in outer space is another important concern. The common interests of all mankind in the exploration and use of outer space for peaceful purposes should be recognized. It is therefore encouraging to note that the draft resolution on the prevention of an arms race in outer space sponsored by Egypt and Sri Lanka, and the draft resolution on transparency and confidence-building measures in outer space activities sponsored by the Russian Federation, have the broad support of Member States.

Transparency and confidence-building measures concerning outer space must be promoted in the

interests of maintaining international peace and security. There is a pressing need to negotiate and conclude, as soon as possible, a legally binding instrument to prevent the weaponization of outer space. In this regard, we consider that the Conference on Disarmament has a primary role to play.

While keeping our focus on the question of weapons of mass destruction, we cannot afford to ignore the challenge posed by small arms and light weapons. These weapons continue to kill and maim tens of thousands the world over. The first Conference to Review Progress Made in the Implementation of the 2001 Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects, held in New York in June and July, failed to live up to expectations, as agreement could not be reached on a final document. The text that came close to being adopted sought to initiate a new process aimed at giving Governments the ability to keep track of ammunition sales. The need to address the issue of the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons in all its aspects remains urgent.

We are meeting at a time when disarmament forums have yielded scant results. Despite that, we must persevere. In this regard, my delegation shares the Under-Secretary-General's view that "There is too much to lose from the collapse of multilateral efforts in disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control. Failure cannot be accepted as an option."

Mr. Sealy (Trinidad and Tobago): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the members of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) that are Members of the United Nations.

Like those delegations that preceded us, we would like to congratulate you very warmly, Madam, on your election to chair the First Committee. Our congratulations also go to the other members of the Bureau on their election. We are confident that your vast experience and deep knowledge of the subject matter, as well as Norway's internationally acknowledged leadership role in the area of disarmament and international security, will serve us in good stead in arriving at a successful outcome of our deliberations in this vital sphere of contemporary international relations.

The States members of CARICOM would also like to thank Mr. Nobuaki Tanaka, Under-Secretary-General for Disarmament Affairs, for his introductory remarks, which provided the Committee with an overview of the stage at which the disarmament and international security agenda stands at the present juncture, and to express appreciation for his views on the direction that States should follow in addressing the many outstanding issues.

The States members of CARICOM fully align themselves with the statement made by the representative of Indonesia on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement. We would like, however, to add our own perspective on some relevant aspects engaging the attention of the Committee at present.

The current difficult and complex situation faced by the international community in the field of nuclear disarmament and the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons is of grave concern to CARICOM member States. On two occasions in the recent past, namely, at the May 2005 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and at the World Summit in September 2005, the international community found it impossible to arrive at a common vision on the steps necessary to advance the cause of nuclear non-proliferation and nuclear disarmament.

CARICOM member States are accordingly of the view that greater political will is needed on the part of the nuclear-weapon States in particular to bridge the widening gap and to promote stricter respect for the legal obligations that flow from adherence to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). The NPT, resting as it does on the three fundamental and equally important pillars of non-proliferation, disarmament and the right to the peaceful use of nuclear technology, is the principal international legal instrument in this sphere and the linchpin of all multilateral efforts thus far.

In the area of non-proliferation, it will be recalled that the five States possessing nuclear weapons at the time of the signing of that Treaty undertook not to transfer nuclear weapons or technology relating to nuclear explosive devices to other States. Non-nuclear-weapon States for their part agreed not to seek or develop nuclear weapons. In spite of those undertakings, non-nuclear-weapon States continue to face threats by nuclear-weapon States. It is imperative, therefore, that the international community strengthen the security of non-nuclear-weapon States. In this regard, CARICOM member States support the call by

the Non-Aligned Movement for the conclusion as a matter of priority of a universal, unconditional and legally binding instrument on security assurances to non-nuclear-weapon States. The conclusion of such a legally binding instrument would represent an important confidence-building measure and promote a more stable and peaceful order globally, particularly in those parts of the world where tensions persist with a potential for escalation.

The international community is also concerned by the proliferation threat posed by the prospect of non-State actors acquiring weapons of mass destruction. In this regard, the Security Council, in its resolution 1540 (2004), requires all States to enact and enforce effective domestic legal and regulatory controls to, inter alia, prevent the proliferation of such weapons and their means of delivery, including by establishing appropriate controls over related materials. CARICOM member States have not yet all fully implemented Security Council resolution 1540 (2004) and accordingly call upon the international community to provide assistance that would enable them to comply fully with their Security Council obligations and be in a position to report adequately to the 1540 Committee.

In this regard, CARICOM member States are hopeful that the regional seminar on implementing Security Council resolution 1540 (2004) in Latin America and the Caribbean, which is scheduled to take place in Lima, Peru, in late November 2006, organized by the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace, Disarmament and Development in Latin America and the Caribbean with financial support from the European Union, will be a useful first step in assisting CARICOM member States in their efforts to comply with these obligations, the central purpose of which is to prevent weapons of mass destruction from falling into the hands of terrorists.

There has, however, been one positive development in the field of nuclear non-proliferation. The recent signing by five Central Asian States of a Treaty establishing a nuclear-weapon-free zone in Central Asia is a development that all CARICOM member States, as parties to the Treaty of Tlatelolco on the denuclearization of Latin America and the Caribbean, welcome most wholeheartedly. We view this as a significant development in the sphere of non-proliferation in the Central Asian region and would urge States in other regions of the globe, particularly in the Middle East, to continue their efforts towards the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones in their respective regions.

With regard to nuclear disarmament, it will be recalled that the preamble and article VI of the NPT call upon the nuclear-weapon States to pursue plans to reduce and liquidate their stockpiles of nuclear weapons and to conclude a treaty on general and complete disarmament under strict and effective international control. CARICOM member States share the concern about the slow pace of progress towards complete nuclear disarmament and the total lack of progress on the part of nuclear-weapon States in achieving the total elimination of their nuclear arsenals, that notwithstanding the 8 July 1996 advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice to the effect that there exists an obligation to pursue in good faith and bring to a conclusion negotiations leading to nuclear disarmament in all its aspects under strict and effective international control. Deep and irreversible cuts in nuclear weapon stockpiles on the part of the nuclear-weapon States, leading to the elimination of nuclear weapons, would, in the opinion of CARICOM member States, strengthen international peace and security and reduce substantially the threats to the very existence of humanity posed by the possession of such weapons of mass destruction.

As concerns the right to the peaceful of use of nuclear technology, the NPT gives every State the inalienable right to use nuclear energy for peaceful purposes. CARICOM members would, accordingly, urge all NPT States parties, in exercising this right to use nuclear energy for peaceful purposes, to conclude the broadest possible safeguards agreements with the IAEA, the sole competent authority for verification of compliance with obligations under safeguards agreements.

I wish here to speak to an aspect of disarmament and international security that is never given the attention it deserves, one which is extremely critical to CARICOM: that of the trans-shipment of hazardous materials through the Caribbean Sea. The risk of an accident or, worse yet, a terrorist attack on one of those shipments poses a grave threat not only to our environment and economic and social development but indeed to our very existence in the Caribbean. CARICOM heads of State or Government have consistently called for a total cessation of those shipments in our waters, and we reiterate that call. We also wish to draw attention to the lack of attention paid

to the issue of liability and compensatory mechanisms in the event of an accident and call for this gap in the IAEA regime to be addressed.

It is not only in the sphere of nuclear disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation that there has been an absence of meaningful progress. That is also the case in the area of conventional weapons. While some perceptible forward movement has been made recently in addressing the problem of small arms and light weapons, through the adoption by the General Assembly of a politically binding International Instrument on the marking and tracing of small arms and light weapons in a timely and reliable manner (see General Assembly decision 60/519), the international community was unable, at the United Nations Conference to Review Progress Made in the Implementation of the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons, held earlier this year, to adopt additional measures to implement further the 2001 Programme of Action.

CARICOM member States are thus deeply disappointed at the inability of the Review Conference to agree on further measures to move this process forward, conscious as they are of the negative impact that illicit trafficking in small arms is having on internal security within the CARICOM subregion. It is also the cause of much suffering, death and destruction in other regions of the globe, particularly in Africa. In this latter respect, CARICOM member States are equally concerned at the unrestrained sale and transfer of conventional weapons. Given the widespread death, destruction and political destabilization caused by small arms and light weapons, CARICOM member States are of the firm opinion that there is an urgent need for strict transfer controls; they would contribute to political stability, peace and security in countries throughout the world.

Substantial progress in achieving nuclear disarmament, in halting the proliferation of nuclear weapons, in putting an end to the illicit trafficking of small arms and light weapons and in controlling those arms, which are the contemporary causes of massive destruction, is essential if all the world's peoples are to pursue their development in peace and security. In our opinion, now is the time to bring nuclear disarmament, nuclear non-proliferation and conventional arms control more forcefully back to centre stage on the international security agenda, and there is no better place to begin generating the political will necessary for so doing than here and now in the First Committee of the General Assembly.

It is also our hope that in forthcoming meetings of the Conference on Disarmament and the Disarmament Commission, both important multilateral forums for negotiating and deliberating, respectively, on issues of disarmament, we can achieve concrete results in the not-too-distant future, having noticed the beginnings of a consensual approach to disarmament issues in those two bodies.

Ms. Charbel (Lebanon) (*spoke in Arabic*): At the outset, Madam, I would like to congratulate you on your election as Chairperson of the First Committee and to reaffirm that you can count on our cooperation in ensuring the success of our work at this session. Let me say also that we are particularly pleased to see a woman chairing this Committee for the first time.

The functions entrusted to the First Committee are very important because disarmament has great implications for international peace and security, human development and the fight against poverty. That is especially true in the light of the many regional conflicts around the world, in which conventional weapons of all kinds are used; the phenomenon of international terrorism and the risk of terrorists acquiring weapons of mass destruction, including nuclear, biological and chemical weapons; and the emerging signs of a new arms race.

But the importance of disarmament has not, unfortunately, been matched by concrete results in multilateral, international forums. A survey of the recent past reveals that, in addition to the long-standing lack of progress in the Conference on Disarmament, the Review Conference on small arms and light weapons and the 2005 Review Conference of Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons were both failures. The current state of disarmament affairs should be an incentive for the Committee to carry out its work in an updated, advanced and effective manner.

My country is situated in a region where conflicts are multiplying and where both conventional and non-conventional weapons are causing many problems that threaten the region and future generations. It is for that reason that we would like to reaffirm our position on a number of disarmament issues.

First, it is very important to continue to address the issue of disarmament in a multilateral context, because arms proliferation affects all countries.

Secondly, the proliferation of nuclear weapons is a danger that should not be ignored. Lebanon supports the establishment in the Middle East of a zone free of weapons of mass destruction. We would like to draw the Committee's attention to the fact that Israel is the only country in the Middle East to possess such weapons and not to have acceded to any multilateral instrument to control its nuclear activities.

Thirdly, it is crucial that we deal with the issue of small arms and light weapons, which are used primarily in regional conflicts, in order to exercise effective control over their production, possession, stockpiling, import and export, as well as to monitor their circulation in post-conflict areas and to initiate confidence-building measures regarding them. In that regard, the call for the effective functioning of multilateral mechanisms should not preclude addressing the root causes of conflict, including in particular the issue of foreign occupation. In that connection, I would like to refer to the use against us of internationally prohibited weapons, especially in Israel's recent aggression against our country.

Fourthly, the global problem of landmines — which, as the Secretary-General has said, are silent killers — continues to be a daily concern for Lebanon that has been caused by the previous and current Israeli occupation. That country has to date refused to provide us with maps of these landmines.

Fifthly, we in Lebanon consider development in all its forms, not armament, to be a priority. It is for that reason that last year we reduced our military expenditures to 8.6 per cent of our budget, with 97.2 per cent of this military budget spent on salaries and social services for military personnel.

In conclusion, I hope that this session injects new momentum into the disarmament machinery, serves to promote international peace and security, energizes the work of this Committee and ensures a successful outcome.

Mr. Abdalhaleem (Sudan) (*spoke in Arabic*): First of all, I would like to congratulate you, Madam, on your election to the Chair of this important Committee, especially given that you come from a country that has made laudable efforts in the resolution of conflict and the restoration of peace and stability in many countries, including my own. I wish you and the other members of the Bureau every success. I also wish to convey my gratitude to your predecessor and to the Under-Secretary-General for Disarmament Affairs, whom I wish to thank for his comprehensive report to the Committee. I would also like to express my gratitude to the Department for Disarmament Affairs for its efforts to promote international cooperation and multilateral mechanisms in the areas of disarmament and the promotion of international peace and security.

Thanks to the sincere will and determination of its Government and people, the Sudan was able two years ago to put an end to one of the longest conflicts in Africa, following the signing of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement with the south. On 5 May 2006, we also signed the Darfur Peace Agreement. At the moment, the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration into society of former combatants, which are issues addressed by this Committee, are our priority. Following the restoration of peace and stability, all our efforts are now being devoted to development and reconstruction.

We are meeting today to take up issues pertaining to disarmament and international security, at a time when the world is experiencing many changes in the sphere of weapons, both at the regional and international levels. We believe that the only way to establish international peace is by strengthening multilateral efforts to confront existing dangers, such as the proliferation of nuclear weapons and weapons of mass destruction, in order to avoid an imbalance of power and discrimination between nuclear-weapon States and non-nuclear-weapon States.

Some countries are making unilateral or bilateral efforts to reduce their strategic nuclear arsenals. But many major Powers continue to develop nuclear, chemical and biological technologies. There is also competition with regard to testing and the development of advanced technologies, on the pretext that they are being used as deterrents and to strengthen national security. That is taking place despite all the agreements, instruments and protocols that prohibit such practices. As a result, the majority of members would say that how we address disarmament is characterized by selectivity and unfairness. That serves to reinforce doubts as to whether disarmament instruments can be effective. Of course, such effectiveness depends upon the full commitment and

compliance of States parties to those instruments without discrimination. It does not depend upon the number of treaties or the number of signatories to them.

It is all the more worrisome to note that many regions and countries are experiencing war, conflicts and tensions, and that military expenditures are rising. At the same time, we note that the budget resources devoted to the attainment of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and other urgent matters such as poverty, natural disasters, the environment and sustainable development continue to decrease. That leads to greater inequality and imbalance. We would therefore like to point out the need for the nuclear Powers to take swift and serious measures to reduce their spending on armament programmes as a preliminary step towards the phased elimination of their strategic nuclear arsenals. We also support measures designed to establish binding international instruments that would offer countries lacking such capacities necessary guarantees against all threats from countries that possess such technologies, without prejudice to the right of any State to use nuclear technology for peaceful scientific purposes in the service of humanity and world development, not in the service of the war machine and destruction.

As the Secretary-General has pointed out, there is broad recognition of the need to establish nuclear-weapon-free zones in various parts of the world. That, in our opinion, is the most expeditious way to achieve nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament and to contribute to the strengthening of regional and international peace and security. Security, as we all know, is an indivisible whole.

Many countries, it is true, have joined treaties creating nuclear-weapon-free zones. Such zones now cover about 50 per cent of the surface of the Earth. However, there are other inflamed areas of the globe that should be declared nuclear-weapon-free zones, in particular the Middle East. We would have been able to achieve that objective, if Israel had not refused to submit its nuclear programmes to a comprehensive International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) safeguards regime. This truly represents a threat to peace and stability, not only in that inflamed region, but throughout the world.

The Sudan is a genuine partner in international efforts to achieve disarmament. We were among the first to join a number of relevant international conventions and other instruments, such as the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), the African Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone Treaty, and the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT), which we signed after the Vienna workshop on the activities of the CTBT Organization.

Our capital, Khartoum, hosted the first meeting of national African bodies on the implementation of the Chemical Weapons Convention. The conference yielded very important recommendations relating to the declaration of Africa as a chemical-weapon-free zone. We also stressed that the activities of countries in this area should relate to peaceful uses only.

The Sudan has also made an effective contribution to the United Nations Programme of Action on Small Arms and Light Weapons. We have participated in regional workshops held in Jordan, Cairo, Nairobi, Addis Ababa and Algeria, as well as conferences held in New York on that subject. We participate because we are convinced that multilateral action, both regional and international, is the best way to ensure the universality and the implementation of conventions and treaties.

An absolute disarmament priority for the Sudan is the issue of small arms and light weapons. We and many other countries suffer from this scourge. We realize that it has tribal, economic and cultural dimensions: these weapons form part of a ritual and a show of force among certain groups. The phenomenon is therefore very difficult to control, but the Sudan, which realizes the danger, is determined to confront it resolutely.

We have thus been making efforts regionally and internationally to control the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons. We are also convinced that there is an interrelationship between that phenomenon and other illicit activities, such as transnational organized crime, terrorism and drug trafficking. For these reasons, we are involved in a number of initiatives through the African Union and the League of Arab States, the IGAD, the Sahel countries, and in bilateral efforts with neighbouring countries in order to demarcate borders and control customs posts and checkpoints.

We support these efforts and insist that manufacturing countries must support the fight against the proliferation of these weapons. We also insist that these weapons should not be supplied to non-State

actors. Support, including technical support, should be given to countries in transition from conflict to peace.

Mr. Bodini (San Marino): Let me first congratulate you, Madam, on your election as Chairperson of the Committee. I would like to extend my congratulations to the entire Bureau, as well as my thanks to last year's chairman, Ambassador Choi.

San Marino and many other Member States are disappointed at the failure to produce positive results at the 2005 Review Conference of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) and the Conference to Review Progress Made in the Implementation of the Programme of Action on Small Arms and Light Weapons. San Marino, like many other small and medium-sized countries, relies mainly on international agreements for our protection. In fact, the United Nations, and the First Committee in particular, represents our first line of defence. We collectively face deadly challenges, such as the increasing risk of weapons of mass destruction falling into the hands of terrorists, the legal proliferation of weapons of mass destruction technology and some Governments' lack of compliance with or defiance of existing treaties and resolutions. This year, it is imperative to re-energize the First Committee and to find together practical measures to achieve global security.

As a signatory to the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT), San Marino welcomes Viet Nam's ratification and urges the few remaining countries to ratify that very important treaty. The legacy of the First Committee at its sixty-first session should be the achievement of fair and positive solutions to disarmament and to all the other troubling issues that threaten the very survival of the human race.

Mr. Al-Najjar (Saudi Arabia) (*spoke in Arabic*): Permit me at the outset to congratulate you, Madam, on your election as Chairperson of the First Committee. We are fully confident that your wise leadership will enable us to achieve the positive results that we seek. I wish you and the other members of the Bureau every success in your work. I should also like to thank the Under-Secretary-General for Disarmament Affairs for his comprehensive statement earlier in the general debate.

My delegation associates itself with the statement made by the representative of Indonesia on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement.

The international community possesses agreed priorities in the area of disarmament. During the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament, held in 1978, it was decided that disarmament efforts must focus on nuclear weapons first, then on other weapons of mass destruction, followed by conventional weapons, to attain the ultimate objective set out in the Charter of the United Nations: the maintenance of international peace and security. However, the main characteristics of multilateral efforts related to the three priorities have been inaction and a lack of progress. Notwithstanding the progress — albeit limited progress — that has been made, we find that treaties have lost their value and that their prestige has been weakened through non-compliance with their provisions. This is exacerbated by the silence and disregard of the international community and the policy of double standards, which has impeded the work of most disarmament mechanisms, including the Conference on Disarmament and the Disarmament Commission, which suffer from paralysis. None of this is cause for optimism.

Last year, unfortunately, we witnessed the failure of the Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), aimed at reaffirming the agreements reached in 1995 — which made possible the unlimited extension of the Treaty — and in 2000. Despite all that, my delegation believes that the limited success should not discourage us. Rather, it should encourage us to intensify our work and to make a constructive contribution in order to overcome the obstacles and shortcomings. Here, I reaffirm my Government's willingness to continue its regional and international efforts to that end, within the framework of its firm ongoing policy aimed at strengthening the principles of disarmament with regard to all weapons of mass destruction.

The Government of Saudi Arabia has reaffirmed its commitment to that approach by joining a number of major treaties and conventions. We were among the first countries to sign the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction, the Biological Weapons Convention, the NPT and a Comprehensive Safeguards Agreement with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and a small quantities protocol. We are continuing our

cooperation with the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1540 (2004) by submitting reports on implementation of the resolution and information about new and existing laws, including, most recently, the national disarmament regime adopted by the Saudi Council of Ministers on 28 November 2005.

Saudi Arabia has made every effort to combat the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons by establishing appropriate governmental structures and bodies and by enacting many regulations and laws, as recently reflected in my Government's 30 August 2005 adoption of a system regarding weapons and munitions. These are detailed in the report submitted to the Department for Disarmament Affairs in implementation of the United Nations Programme of Action to fight that illicit trade.

In that context, my delegation would like to emphasize the need to respect the Programme of Action as an important tool to combat the proliferation of small arms and light weapons. We regret the failure of the June 2006 Review Conference, which, after all our efforts, failed to reach consensus on an outcome document that reflected our hope that we could combat that grave phenomenon.

The lack of progress in efforts to declare the Middle East a nuclear-weapon-free zone is due primarily to Israel's refusal to join the NPT and to subject all its nuclear facilities to the IAEA safeguards regime. Israel is the only country in the region that has not taken that step, despite international pressure aimed at declaring the region, including the Arabian Gulf, a zone free of weapons of mass destruction, especially nuclear weapons. This policy of double standards is a source of great concern for the countries and peoples of the region.

While we support the right of all countries to the peaceful uses of nuclear energy, including the right to obtain nuclear expertise and technology, we call on all countries to follow the path of negotiation to peacefully settle the Iranian nuclear issue, in particular because Iran has always stated that its programme is intended for peaceful purposes.

Today, the world faces great threats and challenges, which impose heavy responsibilities upon the Organization in its duty to maintain international peace and security. We hope that our approach to our work will be characterized by the requisite objectivity, seriousness and vision and that we will be able to meet those challenges and responsibilities and fulfil the aspirations of all.

Ms. McNish (Jamaica): I join others in congratulating you, Madam Chairperson, and the other members of the Bureau on your election and assure you of Jamaica's support during the work of the Committee. I would also like to welcome Mr. Nobuaki Tanaka, Under-Secretary-General for Disarmament Affairs, and to thank him for his overview of the work of the United Nations in the field of disarmament and non-proliferation.

The delegation of Jamaica fully associates itself with the statement made by the representative of Trinidad and Tobago on behalf of the Caribbean Community.

Disarmament and non-proliferation continue to be priority areas on the international peace and security agenda as we continue to face a complex security environment. While there have been some achievements, there is, quite understandably, disappointment at the setbacks experienced in multilateral disarmament efforts. The situation remains a challenging one, casting doubts on the will of the international community to move decisively to promote disarmament and prevent proliferation.

The twin failures of the 2005 Review Conference of the States Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) and the absence of any reference to nuclear disarmament or non-proliferation in the World Summit Outcome Document (resolution 60/1) point glaringly to the huge gap between rhetoric and practical steps to achieve genuine progress in the strengthening of the nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation regime.

Jamaica reaffirms that it considers the NPT to be the bedrock of the global disarmament and non-proliferation regime and the essential foundation for nuclear disarmament. We are extremely concerned, therefore, that recent developments only serve to undermine the Treaty. In that regard, Jamaica believes that urgent and firm steps must be taken to address the challenges and threats to the integrity of and confidence in the Treaty, including, as stated in the report of the Secretary-General on nuclear disarmament, achieving further irreversible cuts in nuclear arsenals, ensuring more effective compliance measures, and reducing the threat of proliferation not only to States, but also to

non-State actors. In other words, the approach to disarmament must be based on the principles of transparency, irreversibility and verification.

In the final analysis, however, Jamaica remains convinced that it is only through the total elimination of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction that international peace and security can be guaranteed. We make no distinction between nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation. In that regard, we urge nuclear-weapon States to fully comply with their obligations and commitments under article VI of the NPT.

By the same token, while underscoring the right of all States to the peaceful uses of nuclear technology in accordance with article IV of the NPT, we insist that this right must be accompanied by the commitment and obligation to comply with the verification and safeguards provisions of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). Jamaica maintains that the IAEA has a critical role to play in reducing the threats posed to international peace and security.

We reiterate the importance of the universality of the Treaty and call on the three States currently outside the NPT framework to accede to the Treaty and place their facilities under comprehensive IAEA safeguards.

A practical step in building confidence in the non-proliferation regime is the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones. The Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone in Latin America and the Caribbean under the Treaty of Tlatelolco has served us well in that region and we believe should be replicated in other regions. We therefore welcome the recent establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in Central Asia and support calls for the establishment of a similar zone in the Middle East. That will go a long way towards reducing tensions in that region.

In tandem with the NPT, the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) constitutes a major plank in the disarmament and non-proliferation regime. We welcome the recent ratification by Viet Nam of the CTBT, bringing us closer to the entry into force of the Treaty. The success of the Treaty depends on its universality and verifiability. In that context, and as we celebrate the tenth anniversary of the adoption of the CTBT, we urge ratification, particularly by annex 2 countries, to ensure its entry into force.

Jamaica is disturbed by the stated intention of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to carry out nuclear testing. We urge that country to refrain from such action and to respect the current moratorium on nuclear testing.

We welcome the opportunity provided by the recent session of the Disarmament Commission to engage in meaningful deliberation on the way forward and in establishing, promoting and elaborating global norms on disarmament. Jamaica also notes recent proposals by nuclear States to prevent the weaponization of outer space and to commence preliminary work on a legal instrument for halting the production of fissile materials for weapons purposes. We believe that this trend could provide the catalyst for renewed confidence in the disarmament machinery.

Even as the international community is rightly focusing attention on nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation, that should not divert attention from the issue of conventional weapons. Without minimizing the importance of efforts in the nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation field, as others have noted, small arms and light weapons kill and maim thousands of people daily and exacerbate tension in zones of conflict, particularly in Africa.

Jamaica does not manufacture arms, yet easy access to illegal weapons and ammunitions and the subsequent high levels of gun violence place an unwarranted burden on our social and economic system. When the Government is forced to devote a significant proportion of the national budget to tackling crime and violence, there can be no question about the linkage between disarmament and development.

As a country that is directly affected by illicit trafficking in small arms and ammunition, Jamaica was therefore deeply disappointed at the failure of the Conference to Review Progress Made in the Implementation of the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All its Aspects. Jamaica and other countries of the Caribbean Community participated actively in the work of the Preparatory Committee and the regional meeting held in Antigua, Guatemala, which adopted a declaration containing elements pertinent to our region. We had looked forward to building on the 2001 Programme of Action.

But we should not allow the inability of the Conference to advance implementation of the Programme of Action to compromise efforts to prevent

the continued illicit trafficking in small arms and light weapons. It is in that context that we reiterate our support for decision 60/519, adopted by the General Assembly at its sixtieth session, which established the International Instrument to Enable States to Identify and Trace, in a Timely and Reliable Manner, Illicit Small Arms and Light Weapons.

More must, however, be done to properly address that problem. It is our view that international efforts should be geared towards adopting a legally binding instrument on markings and tracings for small arms and light weapons. Governments, including those in manufacturing countries, have a responsibility to ensure that weapons and ammunition, where legally acquired, are not diverted to criminals to fuel transnational crime or to arm terrorist groups. Proper checks and balances, including transfer controls, would ensure the legitimacy of the legal trade and in that way local and international law enforcement agencies would be in a better position to trace illegally acquired weapons.

In the Caribbean, concerted efforts are being made at the national and community levels to curb the proliferation of illicit small arms and ammunitions. Bilateral, regional and international cooperation and initiatives are, however, crucial if we are to make any meaningful headway in fighting those phenomena. In that context, we acknowledge the initiatives of the United Nations Development Programme and the Regional Centre for Peace, Disarmament and Development in Latin America and the Caribbean, particularly in the area of coordinating action on small arms. We are also supportive of efforts aimed at concluding an arms trade treaty.

In conclusion, Jamaica shares the view that we must continually reinforce the importance of multilateralism and multilaterally agreed solutions to address disarmament and non-proliferation issues, including small arms and light weapons. Through the strengthening of the multilateral framework, we can achieve our common disarmament and non-proliferation objectives.

Mr. Maema (Lesotho): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the States members of the Southern African Development Community (SADC) – Angola, Botswana, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Madagascar, Malawi, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, South Africa, Swaziland, the United Republic of Tanzania, Zambia, Zimbabwe and my own country, Lesotho.

At the outset, SADC wishes to congratulate you, Madam, and other members of the Bureau on your election to steer the work of the First Committee at the sixty-first session of the General Assembly. We are confident that, with your rich experience and able leadership, you will guide us to a successful conclusion of our work. The States members of SADC assure you of their fullest support and cooperation.

SADC aligns itself with the statements delivered by the representative of Indonesia on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement and by the representative of Nigeria on behalf of the Group of African States. However, the SADC intervention will focus only on some specific areas that are pertinent to our Community.

One of the greatest challenges that SADC has been faced with since its inception is the proliferation of illicit small arms and light weapons, a menace that continues to endanger the socio-economic and political stability of States in our subregion. Our Governments recognize that a scourge of such magnitude can be combated only through a concerted effort at the multilateral level. Hence, in August 1995, the Southern African Regional Police Chiefs Cooperation Organization (SARPCCO) was created to tackle cross-border criminal activity, including the trafficking of small arms and light weapons. One of the top priorities of SARPCCO continues to be the combating of trafficking in firearms.

SADC supports all efforts at various levels aimed at combating trafficking in illicit small arms and light weapons. It was therefore befitting for SADC member States to participate very actively, as they did, in the preparations for and at the 2001 United Nations Conference on the Illicit Traffic in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects. Indeed, immediately following the Conference, in August 2001 the SADC member States adopted the Protocol on the Control of Firearms, Ammunition and Other Related Materials in the Southern African Development Community Region. The Protocol aimed at creating national and regional controls over trafficking and possession of small arms and light weapons. It seeks to address problems related to the illicit manufacturing of firearms and ammunition and their accumulation, trafficking, possession and use in the region. The

implementation of the Protocol is a priority for all SADC member States, and several initiatives, including the convening of conferences, have been undertaken by member States to jumpstart the implementation of the Protocol.

Regarding the implementation of the 2001 United Nations Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All its Aspects, SADC member States have taken several measures at the national level, which include the establishment of focal points to coordinate their work on small arms and light weapons issues, the development of new or the review of relevant legislation, and the destruction of surplus and/or obsolete arms and weapons.

It may be timely to mention at this juncture that SADC had envisaged an outcome of the 2006 Review Conference that would chart the way forward vis-à-vis the implementation of the 2001 Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All its Aspects. Hence, while SADC is confident that the Review Conference was successful in recalling the issue of small arms and light weapons to the attention of the international community, the Community was disheartened by the failure of the Conference to adopt an outcome document.

It is common knowledge that Africa is the most heavily mined continent and also that one of the most critical factors impeding economic recovery in the continent is the infestation by landmines of millions of acres of land that cannot be developed. The havoc and devastation caused by landmines, particularly in some SADC countries, is well known and has been well documented.

SADC is therefore fully behind all efforts initiated by the United Nations, the African Union and other stakeholders aimed at the full implementation and universalization of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-personnel Mines and on Their Destruction. All members of SADC are parties to the Mine Ban Treaty. They are committed to achieving the goal of creating a southern Africa and, ultimately, a world that are free from landmines. The implementation of the Treaty is therefore an obligation that SADC member States take very seriously. Indeed, some SADC member States have completed their domestic legislation to implement the Treaty, while others are in the process of enacting or amending relevant legislation to implement it.

Some SADC member States have destroyed their anti-personnel landmine stockpiles; others are still grappling with the difficult and costly task of demining. However, due to a strong commitment in our subregion to ensuring human security and to meeting the 10-year deadline for the removal of emplaced mines, member States are diverting their meagre resources to attain that noble goal. SADC therefore urges countries that are not yet parties to the Mine Ban Treaty to embrace a ban on anti-personnel landmines and to seriously consider becoming parties to the Treaty.

SADC wishes to join previous speakers who have expressed profound regret over the impasse that has lately befallen the United Nations disarmament machinery. Also regretted are the failure of the 2005 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) to produce a substantive consensus outcome document, as well as the absence of a section on disarmament and non-proliferation in the 2005 Summit Outcome Document. SADC believes that the decisions taken at the 1995 NPT Review and Extension Conference and agreements made at the 2000 NPT Review Conference should form the blueprint for nuclear disarmament.

The ongoing concerted efforts to combat terrorism should be coupled with genuine efforts towards the implementation of the NPT, particularly its article VI. The three pillars of the Treaty — nuclear disarmament, nuclear non-proliferation in all its aspects, and peaceful uses of nuclear energy — should enjoy balanced consideration within the framework of the entire disarmament machinery. SADC therefore commends Brazil on its initiative of calling for the convening of the preparatory process for the next review conference of the parties to the NPT. In the meantime, we wish to call upon those States Members of the United Nations that have not yet signed or ratified the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty to consider becoming parties to it in order to enable its early entry into force.

SADC shares the view that there is a strong connection between disarmament and development and that, furthermore, no socio-economic development can be achieved without peace, security and political

stability. In our view, if United Nations Member States could gather the necessary political will to overcome their differences as they approach important deliberations on issues relating to disarmament, the dreams of many nations for a peaceful and prosperous world would be fulfilled.

Mr. Navoti (Fiji): We are pleased to see you presiding over the First Committee, Madam. Your being the first woman to do so in the 61-year history of this Committee is indeed historic. Your election and stated desire to continue the improvement of our working methods gives my delegation optimism amidst the grim record of our achievements in the recent past. We congratulate you and the members of your Bureau on your election and assure you of Fiji's full support in the work of this Committee at this session.

Fiji is convinced that, given our size, geographical location and ability to influence global affairs, there is no more effective way than multilateralism to bring States together, keep the peace, protect human rights, promote sustainable development and build negotiated solutions to common problems. It is through that conviction that we find the valour to contribute to this debate and to tell the world that what is of concern to the mighty and powerful has bearing and effect on and is also of real concern to the weak and isolated.

This Committee opens its sixty-first session against the backdrop of heightened international concern over the expansion of weapons of mass destruction, particularly nuclear weapons. As a party to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), Fiji laments the fact that large stocks of nuclear weapons continue to exist and that some are still keen to develop even more sophisticated and greater arsenals of such weapons. The expansion of vertical proliferation to include countries other than the five traditional nuclear-weapon States and the persistent danger of horizontal proliferation are made worse by the real threat of having those weapons fall into the hands of non-State actors.

Fiji and other countries in our region enjoy a cordial and satisfactory relationship with our dialogue partners so far as the implementation and observance of the South Pacific Nuclear-Free Zone Treaty are concerned. We can only encourage the replication of such an arrangement to other zones and therefore welcome initiatives of the Central Asian States towards that end.

Fiji supports all efforts to safeguard the international nuclear non-proliferation regime. We encourage dialogue and believe that opportunities for diplomatic avenues within the framework of international law, relevant multilateral conventions and the United Nations Charter ought to be exhaustively taken advantaged of. We look forward to the commencement of the next NPT review process and express our confidence that, through lessons learnt, measurable and substantive progress will be achieved.

It is always important to recall the devastating effects of nuclear-weapons testing on human health and the environment. Equally crucial is the importance of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) in preventing such damage in the future. Despite overwhelming international support for the CTBT and the many ways it contributes to our security, Fiji, like others, mourns the fact that, without the signatures and ratification of those key States that are required by article XIV to effect entry into force of the CTBT, no real certainty can be realized in nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation.

Incidentally, 2006 marks the tenth anniversary of the adoption of the CTBT. Fiji notes and warmly welcomes the ratification of the CTBT earlier this year by our Asian Group neighbour Viet Nam, and encourages others to follow suit.

It is widely accepted that small arms may not have the same terrible cataclysmic potential as weapons of mass destruction; nonetheless, it has been proven that they are responsible for the overwhelming number of lives lost around the globe and have quite simply become everyday weapons of mass destruction. Fiji continues to be gravely concerned about the accumulation and uncontrolled spread of small arms and light weapons in many regions of the world, including the Pacific. We have our own regrettable story regarding the costs of their misuse, and we therefore welcome all efforts being undertaken at both the regional and subregional levels, as well as in this multilateral forum, to curb the illegal trade in small arms and light weapons.

Our failure to agree on an outcome document at the United Nations Conference to Review Progress Made in the Implementation of the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit

Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects in July, lamentable as it was, must not deter our collective resolve to continue our common fight to comprehensively address the nature of the small arms problem in all its aspects. Fiji commends and lends its support to efforts aimed at promoting wider understanding between States on the need for global guidelines for transfer controls of small arms and light weapons. The document we collectively negotiated at the Review Conference remains, in our assessment, the only United Nations document which contains a complete catalogue of such measures.

Much remains to be achieved in the disarmament and non-proliferation machinery. This Committee was sourly reminded on Monday by the Under-Secretary-General for Disarmament Affairs of nine major setbacks of the past year. Though there have been a number of modest achievements, the lack of progress does certainly reflect the current environment facing disarmament issues. Fiji is among those who choose to remain optimistic about the future. We invite the major players in this field to demonstrate their political will to move forward. Security is our collective responsibility.

Archbishop Migliore (Holy See): My delegation congratulates you, Madam, on your election and assures you and your colleagues on the Bureau of our full support.

At one level, the summer of 2006 appears to have been discouraging, with conflicts, destruction and loss of life. The small arms Conference failed to produce any tangible result. World stocks of almost 27,000 nuclear weapons remain alarmingly high. World military expenditures exceeded $1 trillion for the second consecutive year.

But at another level, a stirring in human consciousness is taking place that would suggest that war does not work. Military force does not bring the expected improvement for the common good. Recent wars have unleashed forces that continue to corrode civilizations and the consequent human suffering is inexcusable in an age that possesses the mechanisms for negotiation, mediation, peacemaking and peacekeeping.

Despite the present gloom, positive features can be discerned in the broader field of security, as noted in the report of the Weapons of Mass Destruction Commission. The number of inter-State conflicts has been declining. Peacekeeping operations prevent shooting wars in many places. The Peacebuilding Commission is readying itself to assist States emerging from conflict, thus reducing the risk of their relapse into violence.

This Committee, in its turn, should help the international community to seek the benefits of an increasingly interdependent world. Dialogue is necessary to reach that goal, and much better dialogue is needed in the disarmament forums of the United Nations. That is because, at present, the debate seems to remain sterile. If the human dimension that underlies the subject of small arms were emphasized, perhaps a much-needed arms trade treaty could be achieved. The $4-billion annual trade in small arms is not yet subject to a comprehensive global agreement. Instead, there is a patchwork of national export laws, which unscrupulous arms dealers can circumvent. Six hundred and forty million of those weapons in the world today kill and maim tens of thousands, spark refugee crises, undermine the rule of law, and spawn a culture of violence and impunity.

That is the human side of the small arms debate, which has a deep impact also on children. Surely, focusing on the huge numbers of those who suffer from the illicit spread of small arms should impel us to achieve an arms trade treaty.

The Holy See takes this opportunity to appeal again to the international community to establish a binding legal framework aimed at regulating the trade in conventional weapons of any type, as well as the know-how and technology for their production. In that regard, my delegation supports the draft resolution aimed at establishing common international standards for the import, export and transfer of conventional arms as a step towards a comprehensive, internationally binding instrument on that issue. Moreover, the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms needs stronger support. More transparency in arms is necessary if we are to advance confidence-building measures.

Dialogue must also be advanced in the area of nuclear weapons. The urgency of that increases daily. Recently, the Secretary-General said that the world had reached a crossroads in this regard. One path can take us to a world in which the proliferation of nuclear weapons is restricted and reversed through trust, dialogue and negotiated agreement. The other path

leads to a world in which rapidly growing numbers of States feel obliged to arm themselves with nuclear weapons, and the threat of nuclear terrorism grows.

My delegation agrees that the international community seems almost to be sleepwalking down the latter path, not by conscious choice but rather through miscalculation, sterile debate and the paralysis of multilateral mechanisms for confidence-building and conflict resolution.

That is a strong indictment that should urge all interested parties to make clear commitments to implementing the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, to facilitate the entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty, to negotiate a fissile material cut-off treaty, to legalize the negative security assurances, and to take nuclear weapons off high-alert status. Those steps are valuable in and of themselves. They would also decrease the risks of use, diminish the access of terrorists to catastrophic weapons, and generate support for strengthening non-proliferation.

The Holy See has spoken often on this subject, asking that those Governments which openly or secretly possess nuclear arms, or those planning to acquire them, agree to change their course by clear and firm decisions, and strive for progressive and concerted nuclear disarmament. Policies of nuclear deterrence, typical of the cold war, can and must be replaced by concrete measures of disarmament based on dialogue and multilateral negotiations.

The Chairman: That completes the list of speakers for this morning.

I have been informed that several delegations wish to speak in exercise of the right of reply. May I remind all delegations that, in accordance with the rules of procedure, the number of interventions in the exercise of the right of reply for any delegation at a given meeting should be limited to two per item. The first intervention in the exercise of the right of reply for any delegation on any item at a given meeting should be limited to 10 minutes and the second intervention should be limited to five minutes.

I now call on those delegations that wish to speak in exercise of the rules of procedure.

Mr. Najafi (Islamic Republic of Iran): Today, the First Committee heard a number of unsubstantiated allegations about my country from the representative of the Israeli regime — a regime that is based on violence, occupation, State terrorism and bloodshed.

It is an open secret that Israel has continuously and purposely violated many international laws and norms, not to mention dozens of United Nations resolutions, to which the response of that illegitimate and irresponsible regime has been nothing but complete defiance. In that context, particular reference can be made to the mischievous policy of the Israeli regime on nuclear issues, which is a showcase of its concealment and unabated pursuit of a nuclear arsenal in recent decades, with the support of the United States.

It is indisputable that this ill-intentioned policy has threatened peace and security in the volatile region of the Middle East for years. In fact, Israel's nuclear threat and missile capability, coupled with its behaviour, present a real menace not only to regional peace and security, but also to the whole world.

Therefore, that threat needs to be urgently and decisively addressed by the international community. Indeed, that regime should face a united front and must be kept under continuous pressure to relinquish its nuclear weapons. As demanded by the non-aligned member States earlier in this Committee, Israel should accede to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) and place all its nuclear facilities under international monitoring.

It is worth mentioning that the only existing obstacle to the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East is the non-adherence of that regime to the NPT and its continued clandestine operation of unsafeguarded nuclear facilities, with help and technological support and assistance from the United States. That regime has paid no attention to the constant international calls in various forums, particularly the 2000 NPT Review Conference, which called upon the regime by name to accede to the NPT immediately and without conditions. Moreover, the said regime has never been a party to the international instruments on weapons of mass destruction: the Chemical Weapons Convention, the Biological Weapons Convention and the NPT.

In our view, the baseless allegations and the statement of the representative of the Zionist regime in this Committee today indicate that those who are putting my country under growing, unreasonable and unfair pressure are in fact trying to serve the interests of the illegitimate Israeli regime. We also believe that

the international community is well aware of that ploy and therefore will not give in to the pressure designed to safeguard the illegal policies and practices of the Zionist regime and its illegitimate interests.

The election of the Islamic Republic of Iran to the vice-chairmanship of the United Nations Disarmament Commission and to the General Committee of the International Atomic Energy Agency Conference, as well as the statement issued by 118 heads of State of the Non-Aligned Movement, are clear indications of that. Hence, may that delegation, which is deeply disappointed by the elections, continue to be disappointed.

Mr. Ja'afari (Syrian Arab Republic) (*spoke in Arabic*): My delegation will have ample time to congratulate you, Madam, on your assumption of the chairmanship of this important Committee and to congratulate the other members of the Bureau as well.

I have asked to speak in exercise of the right of reply at this stage in order to respond to the representative of Israel, who invoked my country in his statement before the Committee.

As all members of the Committee know, for several decades now the First Committee has considered the threat posed by Israeli nuclear weapons. Over the years, a draft resolution has traditionally been submitted on that issue at every session. The question of Israeli nuclear weapons and the threat they pose to the countries of the region as a whole is submitted every year before the International Atomic Energy Agency in Vienna. It is clear that the only danger to international peace and security and the countries of the region is that of Israeli nuclear weapons. In that context, we recall Security Council resolution 487 (1981), which addressed that issue and asserted that Israel's nuclear capacities were a danger to the region. The resolution called for the elimination of that threat.

With the assistance of major Powers — which I need not name here because we all know who they are — Israel has been able to build eight nuclear reactors for exclusively military purposes on a land-surface area of approximately 20,000 square kilometres. Israel thereby poses a threat to all the countries of the region, including itself. The truth is clear and precise, and speaks for itself. It requires no verbal manipulations.

The international community is concerned by Israel's nuclear arsenal. Some would even assert that its nuclear capacities exceed those of France, the United Kingdom and China combined. We are not speaking here of poetry or literature. We are repeating facts that are a matter of great concern to the international community in general and to us in particular. In seeking to muddy the waters and to broach issues that are quite irrelevant to matters of disarmament and international security, the representative of Israel tried to divert attention from the great danger posed by Israel and which is an issue of concern to us all.

With the assistance of certain countries, Israel is currently attempting to exploit outer space for military purposes and using nuclear energy to that end, thereby extending its threat into outer space, no longer content to confine itself to the Earth. That is why I invite the members of the First Committee to take those issues into consideration as they listen to the Israeli allegations which have no basis in reality and confirm only Israel's failure to comply with the resolutions adopted by the United Nations on disarmament and, in particular, weapons of mass destruction; with the resolutions of the IAEA; and with resolutions of the Security Council. Israel thereby stands accused of violating international law and of marginalizing itself on matters of disarmament and international security.

Programme of work

The Chairman: Allow me to remind all delegations again that the deadline for the submission of draft resolutions and decisions under all disarmament and international security agenda items is next Wednesday, 11 October, at 6 p.m. Delegations are strongly urged to submit their draft resolutions by that deadline in order to enable the Secretariat to make them available as official documents to the Committee as soon as possible. I assume that all delegations took advantage of the kits that have been prepared by the Secretariat. That will certainly help to speed up the processing of draft resolutions and decisions.

In connection with the preparation for the second phase of the Committee's work, namely the thematic discussion on item subjects and the introduction and consideration of draft resolutions, an indicative timetable was circulated to the Committee during last week's organizational meeting in the form of document A/C.1/61/CRP.2. However, due to some minor corrections of a technical nature to that document, it

has been revised and circulated to all delegations this morning as document A/C.1/61/CRP.2/Rev.1.

In preparing the revised indicative timetable, I have followed the practice already established by the Committee at its previous sessions. After we complete our general debate, hopefully by the end of the morning meeting on Monday, 9 October, I would like to propose that we carry out our discussions for the second phase of the Committee's work in the following manner.

First, during the first week of the thematic discussions, the meeting on the afternoon of Monday, 9 October, will be dedicated to an informal exchange with the Under-Secretary-General for Disarmament Affairs and other high-level officials on the current state of affairs in the field of arms control and disarmament and the role of the respective organizations. As indicated in document A/C.1/61/CRP.2/Rev.1, we will also have as guest speakers the Director-General of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons and the Executive Secretary of the Preparatory Commission for the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization. However, the participation of the Director General of the International Atomic Energy Agency or his representative still needs to be confirmed.

Second, the two meetings on Tuesday morning and afternoon, 10 October, will be dedicated to the issue of nuclear weapons.

Third, the meeting on Wednesday, 11 October, will be devoted to other weapons of mass destruction and outer space (disarmament aspects). We will have a guest speaker, the President-designate of the Review Conference of the States Parties to the Biological Weapons Convention.

Fourth, on Thursday, 12, and Friday, 13 October, both meetings will be dedicated to the issue of conventional weapons. We will also have as guest speakers the President of the Conference to Review Progress Made in the Implementation of the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All its Aspects, and the Chairman of the Group of Governmental Experts on the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms on Thursday; and the President-designate of the Review Conference of the States Parties to the Convention on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Certain Conventional Weapons Which May Be Deemed to Be Excessively Injurious or to Have Indiscriminate Effects on Friday.

Fifth, starting on the second week of the thematic discussions, at the morning meeting of Monday, 16 October, we will first have a panel discussion of independent experts with Mr. Hans Blix, Chairman of the Weapons of Mass Destruction Commission. We will then discuss other disarmament and international security issues. In that connection, we will also have an exchange with the Chairman of the Group of Governmental Experts on Verification.

Sixth, on Tuesday, 17 October, we will discuss regional disarmament and security. The Committee will have an interactive exchange with the Under-Secretary-General for Disarmament Affairs and the three Directors of the United Nations Regional Centres during the meeting.

Seventh, on Wednesday, 18 October, the Committee will discuss the issue of disarmament machinery. The President of the Conference on Disarmament, the Chairman of the United Nations Disarmament Commission, the Chairperson of the Advisory Board on Disarmament Matters and the Director of the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research will be guest speakers. We will also have the follow-up of resolutions and decisions adopted by the Committee at its past sessions and the presentation of reports with the Under-Secretary-General for Disarmament Affairs.

Eighth, on Thursday, 19 October, the representatives of four non-governmental organizations will provide the Committee with presentations on the subject of nuclear issues and small arms and light weapons.

As seen in the note at the bottom of document A/C.1/61/CRP.2/Rev.1, it is my intention to divide the nine formal meetings into three segments so that the Committee can fully utilize the time allocated to it by engaging in productive discussions, as well as introducing all the draft resolutions in an efficient and timely manner. The first segment will start with a guest speaker for some meetings, as indicated in document A/C.1/61/CRP.2/Rev.1.

After the speaker makes his or her opening statement, I will briefly suspend the formal meeting so that we can have an informal question-and-answer

session with that guest speaker. Afterwards, we shall resume the formal meeting and proceed to the second segment, which will consist of interventions by delegations on the specific subject under consideration. The third and last segment, which is also formal, will be to allow time for the introduction of draft resolutions and decisions.

I would also like to mention that, at the last meeting of that second stage of our work, which I left on reserve for Friday, 20 October, delegations will still be able to introduce remaining draft resolutions, if needed. That will certainly enable the Committee to have sufficient time during the action phase of its work. Therefore, I strongly urge all delegations to do their utmost to introduce their draft resolutions during the upcoming second phase of the Committee's work. The Committee could also use that last meeting for discussions on issues that require additional time.

I would also like to add that if there is sufficient time left after the Committee concludes its thematic discussion of a specific subject and the introduction of draft resolutions for any given meeting, we could continue our discussions by moving to the next thematic subject on our timetable. Therefore, following the concept of the rolling list of speakers we now have for the general debate, I appeal to all delegations to be always prepared to discuss the next thematic subject, if necessary.

Mr. Najafi (Islamic Republic of Iran): If it is the wish of the Committee to change the format of the meeting, we can certainly go along with that. I would just like to seek clarification concerning the reason that we changed those segments referred to from informal to formal. Given the fact that the proceedings of the First Committee should be recorded, our understanding was that we decided last year to make the change to informal in order to ease the burden of verbatim records for the proceedings of the Committee. I would like to know the main reason for changing those informal segments to formal.

The Chairman: As I said, the reason we made this technical change was that we wanted to have it identical to last year's proceedings. This is exactly the way it was done last year. There was kind of a technical error in the Chairman's note, so I wished to make it clear that the proceedings will be exactly the same as was agreed last year.

Mr. Shamaa (Egypt): With reference to document A/C.1/61/CRP.2/Rev.1, we agree that the intention is to have the practice proceed along the same line as was taken last year, but I have to confess that I am not sure that this is exactly the same as last year's. Since I do not have the document with me here, I would like to return to this matter once we check last year's documents in terms of how we partitioned the session. My recollection is a little bit different, but I would not want to venture into that now, since I do not have last year's work programme document.

The Chairman: The Secretariat has sought to be sure that it is exactly the same and it is my understanding, at least, that it is the same.

I call on the Secretary of the Committee.

Mr. Sareva (Secretary of the Committee): We did go to the verbatim records from last year and representatives are, of course, invited to go back and check those records. It would appear that what the Chairperson has elaborated would best reflect last year's proceedings, as reflected in the verbatim records, but certainly delegations are invited to check the records themselves in order to have full confidence.

Mr. Hashmi (Pakistan): In agreeing with what my colleague from Egypt has said, my delegation, too, has a recollection that is slightly different from what has been conveyed in the document that has been circulated. Could we request that we defer a decision on the document to a later stage, when we will have checked the record, and that we return to this matter later?

The Chairman: Absolutely. I think we will come back to making a decision on this matter tomorrow. In the meantime, as the Secretary said, representatives are all free to check their records.

Let me also inform members that there will be no formal list of speakers for the upcoming second phase of our work. Nonetheless, I would encourage delegations to inform the Secretariat of their plans to speak prior to the start of the meetings. If they do not, all requests for interventions will be taken directly from the floor on the given day.

The meeting was adjourned at 1 p.m.